



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES



Drought Update

Thursday, July 2, 2015

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Statewide Water Use Declined 29% in May, New Figures Show:** On July 1, the State Water Board released the State Water Board [announced](#) that the statewide residential water use declined nearly 29% in May, the steepest drop to date since urban water suppliers began reporting monthly conservation levels last year. The May figures are a significant improvement over the 13.6% reduction achieved statewide in April, and may be partially due to a limited amount of rain that fell in many parts of the state in May. The monthly figures reflect same-month water use comparisons of 2015 to 2013.
- **Senior Water Rights Curtailed on Merced and Upper San Joaquin Rivers:** On June 22, the State Water Board [issued curtailments](#) to water rights holders on the Merced River with rights dating back to 1858, as well as all pre-1914 appropriative rights on the Upper San Joaquin River due to insufficient water availability. In addition, a curtailment notice is being sent to the City of San Francisco for four appropriative water rights on the Tuolumne River dating back to 1903. The State Water Board continues to assess other watersheds to determine the need of additional senior water rights curtailment in other watersheds is being assessed weekly. For more information on notices of water availability, please refer to the State Water Board [website](#).
- **Drought Prompts Fish Evacuation at American River and Nimbus Hatcheries:** On June 25, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) [announced](#) the transfer of fish from the American River and Nimbus hatcheries, for the second year in a row, due to extreme drought conditions and the reduction of cold water supply available. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation suggests that water temperatures at the hatcheries could be lethal for cold water fish by August.
- **DWR Announces Funding Awards for Grants to Save Water and Energy:** On June 24, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Water-Energy Grant Program [awarded](#) \$28 million to 25 projects that will save water, energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The funding for this program is appropriated through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, California's cap-and-trade program, to invest in projects that reduce carbon pollution while also creating jobs, improving air quality and providing other benefits, such as energy and water savings. The final awards can be viewed on the DWR Water-Energy Grant Program [website](#).
- **DWR Holds Public Meeting Webinar on Turf Replacement Initiative:** On July 2, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) will hold a meeting to allow the public to comment on the design of the statewide turf replacement initiative. This program will replace 50 million square feet of lawns and ornamental turf with drought tolerant landscapes and will focus on underserved and drought impacted communities. To learn more about this program, visit DWR's Turf Replacement Initiative [website](#).

- **State Water Board Presents Safe Drinking Water Plan to California Legislature:** On June 19, the State Water Board [presented](#) the Safe Drinking Water Plan to the State Legislature, which focuses on how to improve access to reliable and healthy drinking water for communities throughout the state. The report focuses on approximately 8,000 public water systems that are under the purview of the State Water Board Division of Drinking Water. To learn more about the [Safe Drinking Water Plan](#).
- **New Federal Drought Relief Funding for California Includes \$130M for Watershed Restoration:** On June 24, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) [announced](#) a new federal drought relief package totaling \$150 million that includes \$130 million for the restoration of California's watersheds. The funding package also includes \$13.7 million to assist agricultural producers with water infrastructure support needs and \$6.3 million for emergency drinking water assistance in rural communities.
- **California's Water Conservation Education Program Campaign:** On June 30, Save Our Water launched a new public education campaign urging Californians to make even more cuts in water use. Save Our Water's campaign asks Californians to "Let It Go" by limiting outdoor water use and letting lawns fade to gold for the summer. The campaign also stresses the importance of preserving water resources for trees and other important landscapes.

The public education campaign included radio messaging on National Public Radio (NPR) affiliates, outdoor advertising, and digital campaigns. In addition, Save Our Water has become a stronger influence on social media, reaching over 1,000,000 Californians on the first day of summer. For easy-to-use water saving tips, visit saveourwater.com, and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). For the new Spanish-language Save Our Water campaign website, visit ahorrenuestraagua.com.

- **CDFW Reminds the Public to be Rattlesnake Safe When Outdoors:** On June 11, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) [reminded](#) the public to be cautious of the venomous rattlesnake and what actions to take when one strikes. Per CDFW, there has been an increase in the rise of human-wildlife incidents due to the severe ongoing drought conditions. Rattlesnakes are not confined to rural areas, but they have been found in urban areas, riverbanks, lakeside parks and in golf courses and are generally not aggressive and usually strike only when threatened or deliberately provoked and on rare occasion can cause serious injury to humans. To learn more about snake safety precautions, visit the CDFW [website](#).
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Task Force continues to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought. During the most recent Task Force meeting on June 25, Save Our Water provided an overview regarding public education efforts as well as sharing results from a targeted public opinion survey. Save Our Water is also working with the Department of Water Resources in support of the turf replacement program. SWRCB indicated that May conservation numbers will be released on July 1. On July 15, SWRCB will release June conservation numbers.

ONGOING DROUGHT SUPPORT

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental and Utility Assistance:** The Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 715,172 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 653,002 boxes of food have been picked up by 342,521 households. By July 3, an additional 9,061 boxes will be delivered to Fresno, Kern, Lake, Imperial and Tulare County.

The non-profit group La Cooperativa continues to distribute the \$10 million state-funded emergency rental assistance to families and individuals across counties most impacted by the drought. As of June 11, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$8,751,343 have been issued to 5,909 applicants in 21 counties, with \$5,657 remaining in assistance funds.

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) allocated an additional \$600,000, under the federally-funded Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), to continue the [Drought Water Assistance Program \(DWAP\)](#) which provides financial assistance to help low-income families pay their water bills. As of June 19, CSD has reported that a total of \$150,354 has been issued to 771 households.

CSD is in the process of allocating \$400,000, under CSBG, to continue the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) drought assistance program, which provides assistance in employment training and placement services to individuals impacted by the drought. This program provides employment training and placement services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers suffering job loss or reduced employment due to the drought. CSD continues to ramp up program activities by developing marketing and outreach plans, pre-screening potential enrollees and executive MSFW service contracts. CSD will receive the first report of expenditures on July 20.

- **Drought Response Funding:** The \$687 million in state drought funding that was appropriated last March through emergency legislation, as well as \$142 million provided in the 2014 Budget Act, continues to advance toward meeting critical needs. To date, \$468 million has been committed, and nearly \$625 million of the emergency funds appropriated in March came from sources dedicated to capital improvements to water systems. Since March, the Department of Water Resources has expedited grant approvals, getting \$21 million immediately allocated to grantees that were pre-approved for certain projects.

As planned in March, the next \$200 million of expedited capital funding was awarded in October, and the remaining \$250 million will be granted by fall 2015. The 2014 Budget Act appropriated an additional \$53.8 million to CAL FIRE over its typical budget to enhance firefighter surge capacity and retain seasonal firefighters beyond the typical fire season.

As a result of continuing drought conditions, emergency legislation was enacted in March 2015 that appropriated over \$1 billion of additional funds for drought-related projects and activities. The Administration's May Revision proposal includes an additional \$2.2 billion for programs that protect and expand local water supplies, improve water conservation, and provide immediate relief to impacted communities.

CURRENT DROUGHT CONDITIONS

- **Fire Activity:** Since the beginning of the year, CAL FIRE has responded to over 2,706 wildfires across the state, burning 12,378 acres in the State Responsibility Area. The number of new fire starts is well above the five-year average for the same time period of 1,768 fires. However, the number of acres burned this year is lower than the five-year average of 14,940 acres burned year to date.

As of July 1, the Lake Fire in the San Bernardino National Forest remains the largest in the state at 31,359 acres (in Federal Responsibility Area). It is 65% contained. The Washington Fire in Alpine County (also in Federal Responsibility Area), south of the town of Markleeville, is currently 17,790 acres and 66% contained.

- **CAL FIRE Suspends Outdoor Residential Burning:** California's increased fire activity this year, coupled with record-setting drought conditions, require CAL FIRE to take every step possible to prevent new wildfires from starting. To date, all counties have suspended burn permits. This suspension bans all residential outdoor burning of landscape debris including branches and leaves. The department may issue restricted temporary burning permits if there is an essential reason due to public health and safety. For additional information on preparing for and preventing wildfires visit www.ReadyForWildfire.Org.
- **Dry Well Reports:** As California enters the fourth consecutive summer of drought, Cal OES continues to monitor and identify communities and local water systems in danger of running out of water. Approximately 1,952 wells statewide have been identified as critical or dry, which affects an estimated 9,760 residents. As of June 25, Cal OES has reported that 1,822 of the 1,952 dry wells are concentrated in the inland regions within the Central Valley.
- **Vulnerable Water Systems:** The State Water Board continues to provide technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state. Since January 2014, 81 out of the 106 projects approved to receive emergency funding for interim replacement drinking water have been executed. On May 19, the State Water Board adopted Guidelines for administering the latest emergency drought appropriations of \$19 million announced this past March. To date, the State Water Board has received requests for \$1.7 million of those funds.
- **Reservoir Levels (% capacity):** Since June 19, Central Valley reservoirs from Shasta and Trinity in the North to Isabella in the South had a net loss in storage of 282,073 acre-feet, with total gains being 3,263 acre-feet and total losses being 285,336 acre-feet. Shasta Reservoir decreased by 48,804 acre-feet, while San Luis Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir for the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, decreased its storage by 71,543 acre-feet. For more information, please visit the [California Data Exchange Center](http://CaliforniaDataExchangeCenter.org).

[Reservoir Levels](#) as of July 1 remain low, including: Castaic Lake 34% of capacity (40% of year to date average); Don Pedro 37% of capacity (47% of average); Exchequer 13% of capacity (18% of average); Folsom Lake 44% of capacity (54% of average); Lake Oroville 39% of capacity (48% of average); Lake Perris 37% (45% of average); Millerton Lake 35% of capacity (44% of average); New Melones 17% of capacity (26% of average); Pine Flat 27% of capacity (39% of average); San Luis 39% of capacity (62% of average); Lake Shasta 48% of capacity (60% of average); and Trinity Lake 38% of capacity (45% of average). An update of water levels at other [smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

Weather Outlook: An upper low pressure is travelling to the Southwest of California. With moisture moving Northward from Western Mexico, light showers and thunderstorms over the Sierra and San Bernardino Mountains are expected early next week. Above normal temperatures are expected over the next week.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 57 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **25 Counties:** El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Plumas, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne and Yuba.
 - **11 Cities:** City of Live Oak (Sutter County), City of Lodi (San Joaquin County), City of Manteca (San Joaquin County), City of Montague (Siskiyou County), City of Porterville (Tulare County), City of Portola (Plumas County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), City of San Juan Bautista (San Benito County), City of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara County), and City of West Sacramento (Yolo County) and City of Willits (Mendocino County).
 - **9 Tribes:** Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County), Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria (Sonoma County), Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (Madera County) Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe (Mendocino County), Tule River Indian Tribe (Tulare County), Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (Yolo County) and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt County).
 - **12 Special Districts:** Carpinteria Valley Water District (Santa Barbara County), Goleta Water District (Santa Barbara County), Groveland Community Services District (Tuolumne County), Lake Don Pedro Community Services District (Mariposa Stanislaus County), Mariposa Public Utility District (Mariposa County), Meiners Oaks Water District (Ventura County), Montecito Water District (Santa Barbara County), Mountain House Community Service District (San Joaquin County), Nevada Irrigation District (Nevada County), Placer County Water Agency (Placer County), Tuolumne Utilities District (Tuolumne County) and Twain Harte Community Services District (Tuolumne County).
- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies (AWCA) [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.

On June 24, ACWA [released](#) a Drought Response Toolkit to assist water agencies as they take action to meet state-mandated water conservation target and communicate information about water use restrictions, enforcement and other issues with their customers, media and other audiences.

- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 32 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yolo.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** A total of 5 tribes have established drought task forces to coordinate tribal drought response. These tribes include: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Hopland Tribe (Mendocino County), Kashia Band of Pomo Indians (Sonoma County), Sherwood Valley Tribe (Mendocino County), and Yurok Tribe (Humboldt and Del Norte County).

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)
Local Government, [Drought Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)

California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)
California Department of Water Resources, [Current Water Conditions](#)
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
State Water Resources Control Board, Drinking Water, [SWRCB Drinking Water Program](#)
California State Water Project, [Information](#)

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for Current Conditions throughout the Region
[U.S. Drought Portal](#), National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)
National Weather Service [Climate Predictor Center](#)
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)
U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance Office: www.sba.gov/disaster